



NEWS RELEASE

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DISTRICT OF ALASKA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, February 8, 2008

08-20

**THOMAS RANES PLEADS GUILTY TO MONEY LAUNDERING CHARGES
AND MARIJUANA IMPORTATION CONSPIRACY**

Pursuant to Plea Agreement, Ranes Facing Life In Federal Prison

Anchorage, Alaska – Acting United States Attorney Karen L. Loeffler announced today, February 8, 2008, that Thomas P. Ranes, a resident of Anchorage, Alaska, pleaded guilty in federal court to one count of marijuana importation conspiracy, one count of money laundering, and one count of international money laundering. The defendant also admits to the forfeiture contained in two counts of the indictment.

Ranes, age 33, pleaded guilty to the three counts before United States District Court Judge Ralph R. Beistline.

In connection with the guilty plea, Assistant United States Attorney Thomas C. Bradley advised the court that beginning in or about early 2003 and continuing through April 22, 2006, Ranes agreed with Thomas Cody, Joseph Bryant, Dennis Shine and other individuals, both named and unnamed in the indictment, to facilitate the importation and distribution of Canadian marijuana. The defendant knew the group would be importing marijuana from Canada for the purpose of distributing it in Alaska. During the course of his involvement, this group imported over 1,000 kilograms of marijuana, and this was foreseeable to him. Ranes joined this group with the knowledge that the goal was to import and distribute marijuana, and with the intent of helping achieve these goals by, among other things: (1) fabricating hidden compartments in commercial trucks and other vehicles to facilitate the importation of the marijuana; (2) arranging for the structuring of cash bank deposits involving the proceeds of the conspiracy so that the bank would not file currency transaction reports, disclosing the deposit of large quantities of currency; (3) arranging for the wire transfer to the Ukraine of funds received in payment for marijuana; (4) assisting Thomas Cody by paying him as an "employee" of Ranes' business, *Ranes and Shine*, despite the fact that he did no work for the business, which enabled Cody to conceal his involvement in the conspiracy; and (5) driving from Canada into the United States (*i.e.*, the State of Alaska) in vehicles in which marijuana was concealed.

Ranes and his business associates borrowed approximately \$540,000 from Thomas Cody, which Ranes knew to be the proceeds of marijuana smuggling and which he used as operating capital for *Ranes and Shine*. With respect to money laundering, on or about July 1, 2005, Ranes arranged for another member of the conspiracy to conduct financial transactions on behalf of himself. Ranes gave this other member of the conspiracy approximately \$45,000 in cash, which he took into *Northrim Bank* and used to

purchase a cashier's check made out to *Ranes and Shine* for that amount, under the pretext that it was payment for a business debt. Raney knew this money constituted proceeds of marijuana trafficking activity. This financial transaction was conducted in order to conceal and disguise the nature, location, source, ownership and control of drug trafficking proceeds by making it appear that it was a legitimate *Ranes & Shine* business transaction.

With respect to international money laundering, on or about October 20, 2004, Raney received approximately \$40,000 in cash from Joe Bryant, which represented proceeds from marijuana sales. Raney arranged to wire this money from *Northrim Bank* in Alaska to *Marine Transport Bank* in the Ukraine. This transaction disguised the true source of the wire transfer as well as Bryant's and Cody's ownership of the funds.

During the time Raney was involved in the conspiracy, he learned that in January 2003, Thomas Cody had arranged for an assault to be made upon another individual who was setting up a competing marijuana distribution network. The assault was committed by shooting the other individual five times with a firearm. Raney was personally threatened by Thomas Cody on more than one occasion during the existence of the conspiracy. On May 31, 2005, Raney became aware that co-defendant Dennis Shine manufactured and tested a silencer for a 9 millimeter Beretta firearm at the *Ranes and Shine* shop, for the purpose of using the Beretta firearm to kill a co-conspirator. Dennis Shine admitted to law enforcement in approximately June 2007, that on June 1, 2005, he murdered Thomas Cody by lying in wait in Cody's home and then killing him by shooting him in the head with the silencer-equipped Beretta pistol. Shine admitted to law enforcement at that time that he committed this murder in furtherance of the conspiracy and during the time in which Shine and Cody were both members of the conspiracy. Raney admitted that he was a member of the conspiracy at that time as well. The murder fell within the scope of the unlawful agreement and Raney could have reasonably foreseen that it would be a necessary and natural consequence of the unlawful agreement, that is, it was foreseeable to him that a firearm would be used in the course of the conspiracy and that a death would result from such use.

At the time of Thomas Cody's death, Raney caused to be recovered approximately one million dollars in cash proceeds of marijuana trafficking belonging to Cody and Bryant that had been sent to Canada for eventual transfer to Ukraine for investment on Cody and Bryant's behalf. After Cody's death, Raney arranged for approximately one million dollars of that money to be returned to Alaska. After Cody's death, Raney assumed a greater role in the marijuana trafficking and smuggling conspiracy than he had held before, organizing shipments and arranging deliveries. Raney maintained that role until arrested in April 2006, when the conspiracy effectively ended.

Judge Beistline scheduled sentencing for April 24, 2008. The law provides for a mandatory minimum ten years to life imprisonment for marijuana importation conspiracy, a fine of \$4 million, or both. The law provides a maximum total of 20 years imprisonment for each count of money laundering and international money laundering, a fine of \$500,000, or both. Raney is also facing a mandatory minimum of five years to life of supervised release. Under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, the actual sentence imposed is based upon the seriousness of the offenses and the criminal history, if any, of the defendant.

Pursuant to the plea agreement, the defendant agreed to admit to the forfeiture contained in Counts 141 and 142 of the indictment. In full satisfaction of these counts, the defendant forfeits any interest he may have in 83 assets including numerous firearms, vehicles, real property, and currency. The total value of the assets is several million dollars.

Pending sentencing, the court continued the defendant's incarceration.

The Alaska State Troopers, Drug Enforcement Administration, Internal Revenue Service—Criminal Investigations, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement conducted the investigation that led to the prosecution of Ranes.

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Items Subject to Forfeiture

1. 2004 BLACK MERCEDES-BENZ MODEL E55, SEDAN 4-DOOR, VIN WDBUF76J54A421493, Alaska License Plate Number ERK649;
2. 2005 BEIGE FORD F250 SUPER DUTY, 4-DOOR EXTENDED CAB PICKUP TRUCK, VIN 1FTSX21P95ED33593, Alaska License Plate Number EVG533;
3. 2001 WHITE 5TH WHEEL GOOSENECK FLATBED TRAILER, VIN 5BYEG24201E000551, Alaska License Plate Number 1769SH;
4. 2005 SILVER TRITON ENCLOSED SNOWMACHINE TRAILER, VIN 4TCSU22045HP01335 Alaska License Plate Number 9091RN;
5. 2000 BLACK FORD F350 EXTENDED CAB DUALY PICKUP TRUCK, VIN 1FTWX33F2YEC74029, Alaska License Plate Number ENF430;
6. 2006 FLATBED ALUMINUM TRAILER, Alaska License Plate Number 5115RN;
7. VOLVO L-110E FRONT END LOADER;
8. SMITH & WESSON .45 CALIBER 1911 PISTOL, Serial Number JRE9940;
9. GLOCK MODEL 36 .45 CALIBER ACP PISTOL (Single Stack), Serial Number FNW506;
10. 2001 BLUE FORD MUSTANG GT COUPE, VIN 1FAFP42X91F124652, Alaska License Plate Number EPH366;
11. 2004 BLACK FORD EXPEDITION EDDIE BAUER, 4-DOOR WAGON/SPORT UTILITY, VIN 1FMPU18L94LA04832, Alaska License Plate Number EMC331;
12. 2003 H2 HUMMER, VIN Unknown, Alabama License Plate Number Unknown;
13. 2002 BLACK SLND FLATBED, VIN 2S9EB331X21029929, Alaska License Plate Number 5271RL;
14. 2005 WHITE TRAILKING FLATBED TRAILER, VIN 1TKU016285M010123, Alaska License Plate Number 4191SK;
15. 1993 BLUE FORD F250 SUPER CAB PICKUP TRUCK With Diamond Plate Bed Side Protectors, VIN 1FTHX26H2PKA88541, Alaska License Plate Number 9267CX;
16. 2004 WHITE FORD F450 SUPER DUTY, 4-DOOR EXTENDED CAB CHASSIS, VIN 1FDXX47P84EC50305, Alaska License Plate Number ETD875;

17. 2006 TAN TRAILING FLATBED TRAILER, VIN 1TKU016286M072915, Alaska License Plate Number 5702SK;
18. 2002 BLACK HAULMARK ENCLOSED FLATBED CAR TRAILER, VIN 4XSGB28232G037941, Alaska License Plate Number 8686RP;
19. YELLOW FLATBED TOW TRUCK, Acquired From Green's Towing, VIN Unknown, Alaska License Plate Number Unknown;
20. 2004 YELLOW INTERNATIONAL FLATBED TOW TRUCK, VIN 1HTMMAAM44H654555, Alaska License Plate Number EMF695 ;
21. 2003 FORD MUSTANG COBRA, STREET LEGAL DRAGSTER, Manufactured By SKINNY KID RACING, Color: Yellow With Red Flames;
22. 1964 RED PONTIAC GTO, 2-Door, VIN 824F23210, Alaska License Plate Number EWK484;
23. CUSTOMIZED GOLF CART;
24. 1971 GREEN CHEVROLET STANDARD CAB SHORTBED 4X4 PICKUP TRUCK, Serial Number KE141S669517, Alaska License Plate Number ENT716;
25. 1994 BLUE FORD F350 DUALY CREW CAB 4X4 PICKUP TRUCK, VIN 1FTJW36H9REA36299, Alaska License Plate Number EHD375;
26. 2001 MALIBU WAKESETTER BOAT, MODEL 21VL, HULL NUMBER US-MB2K6978F303, Including Accessories;
27. HAULMARK BOAT TRAILER MODEL Po110590, Manufactured by Extreme Engineering, VIN 5DBBB22253R000903, Alabama License Plate Number 5TR3916;
28. 1994 CHEVROLET KODIAK C6H042 TOW TRUCK, With Tow Equipment, VIN 1GBE6H1J6RJ107351, Alaska License Plate Number DYL348;
29. 1996 HAULMARK G824T3 ENCLOSED CAR TRAILER, VIN 16HGB2420TU004179;
30. 2004 SEA DOO BOMBARDIER RXP JET SKI, VIN ZZN42618C404;
31. 2004 SEA DOO BOMBARDIER RXP JET SKI, VIN ZZN57196F404;
32. 2004 SHORELANDER MIDWEST DUAL JET SKI 2200 TRAILER, VIN 1MDKNKK124A281488;

33. 2005 POLARIS ATV SPORTSMAN 800 EFI, VIN 4XAMH76A65A611162;
34. 2005 POLARIS ATV SPORTSMAN 800 EFI, VIN 4XAMH76A05A381103;
35. 2005 POLARIS MODEL S05PL8DSC SNOWMACHINE, VIN SN1PL8DS25C540503, Alaska License Plate Number SD0331;
36. 1998 SKI DOO SNOWMACHINE, VIN 140700798;
37. WEATHERBY MARK V .338 CALIBER RIFLE, Serial Number SS008083;
38. SMITH & WESSON MODEL 329 .44 MAGNUM REVOLVER, Serial Number CFZ3604;
39. 1990 FORD MUSTANG RACE CAR, BLUE, VIN 1FACP40E3LF200941, Alaska License Plate Number DXS406;
40. \$10,930.00 IN UNITED STATES CURRENCY;
41. \$46,911.64 HELD IN NORTHRIM BANK ACCOUNT NUMBER 7100390025;
42. \$45,571.70 IN U.S. CURRENCY HELD IN FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF ALASKA ACCOUNT NUMBER 30425268;
43. \$28,871.70 IN U.S. CURRENCY HELD IN FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF ALASKA ACCOUNT NUMBER 30481808;
44. \$6,864.48 IN U.S. CURRENCY HELD IN ALASKA USA FEDERAL CREDIT UNION ACCOUNT NUMBER 204509;
45. REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1301 MULDOON ROAD, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99504;
46. REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1625 E. 64th AVENUE, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99507;
47. REAL PROPERTY DESCRIBED AS NHN HILLCREST S/D 8 LOTS, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99515;
48. 2004 FORD F350 PICKUP TRUCK, VIN 1FDWF37L14EC82504;
49. 2005 RENEGADE MOTORHOME MODEL 22/12 32', VIN 1FVHA6CK85LN39363;
50. 2005 KIBBI LLC RENEGADE CAR TRAILER, VIN 1K9500T3661160003;

51. 2004 FORD F150 PICKUP TRUCK, VIN 1FTWW33P64EB71492;
52. 2005 CHEVROLET K2500HD SILVERADO PICKUP TRUCK, EXTENDED CAB, VIN 1GCHK292X5E121481;
53. GLOCK MODEL 29 10MM HANDGUN, Serial Number CKS783;
54. OLYMPIC ARMS MODEL CAT-AR .223 CALIBER RIFLE, Serial Number 03383;
55. MOSSBERG MODEL 500A 12 GAUGE SHOTGUN, Serial Number R154267;
56. \$90,700.00 IN UNITED STATES CURRENCY, Seized April 22, 2006, From Joe Bryant At 1301 Muldoon Road, Anchorage, Alaska;
57. 2005 FORD F350, FLATBED WELDING TRUCK, VIN 1FDWF37P95EC46760;
58. 2005 BOMBARDIER SKIDO 800H0 SUMMIT ADRENALIN 144", VIN 2BPSC5A75V000305, Alaska License Plate Number SD2509;
59. 2006 CHEVROLET C2500 DIESEL TRUCK, GRAY IN COLOR, VIN 1GCHK232X6F133621, Alaska License Plate Number EWV384;
60. GLOCK MODEL 36, .45 ACP (SINGLE STACK), PISTOL, Serial Number FNW506;
61. SMITH & WESSON MODEL 329, .44 MAGNUM, REVOLVER, Serial Number CFZ3604;
62. SMITH & WESSON .45 CALIBER PISTOL WITH MALASER SIGHTS, Serial Number JRE9940;
63. GLOCK 9MM PISTOL, Serial Number HFR612;
64. MARIJUANA GROW EQUIPMENT, Consisting of Tanks, Lights, Water Pumps, Ballasts, Timers, Generator, Fans, Heaters, & Humidifier;
65. SMITH & WESSON .357 AIRLITE HANDGUN, Serial Number CFU4243;
66. REMINGTON MODEL 7, 7MM RIFLE, WITH LUEPOLD SCOPE, Serial Number S7643871;
67. 2001 THUNDER JET MAXIM/RB BOAT WITH TRAILER, Serial Number AHQ10070E101, Alaska License Plate Number 6678-AB;
68. 5 KRUGERRAND COINS, 1 OZ. EACH, & 4 NATURAL GOLD NUGGETS;

69. 1998 FORD EXPLORER, BLUE IN COLOR, VIN 1FMYU24E8WUA48979, Alaska License Plate Number ESY775;
70. BOBCAT LOADER, Serial Number 512221357;
71. 2006 HARLEY-DAVIDSON FATBOY MOTORCYCLE, VIN 1HD1BMY166Y028106, Alaska License Plate Number 8054RP;
72. 2003 HONDA CR125 MOTORCYCLE, SILVER IN COLOR, VIN JH2JE01363M503762;
73. 2004 FORD F350 WITH BOSS ATTACHMENTS, WHITE IN COLOR, VIN 1FDWF37L14EC82504, Alaska License Plate Number ESS312;
74. 2004 INGERSOLL RAND LIGHTSOURCE, Serial Number 340570UJN789;
75. 1993 FORD MUSTANG LX SPORT, BLACK IN COLOR, VIN 1FACP41E4PF165721, Washington License Plate Number 636UAJ;
76. 1971 CHEVROLET EL CAMINO, RED IN COLOR, VIN 136801L106392;
77. GENIE MODEL S-80 4WD MANLIFT, Serial Number 305;
78. 2004 YAMAHA 4-WHEELER RAPTOR ATV, BLACK IN COLOR, VIN UNKNOWN;
79. \$25,000.00 IN UNITED STATES CURRENCY, Seized June 26, 2006, From Justin Killian at 7001 Kathleen Circle, Anchorage, Alaska;
80. 2004 F250 HARLEY DAVIDSON SUPER DUTY CREW PICKUP TRUCK, BLACK IN COLOR, VIN 1FTNW21P44EC05499, Alaska License Plate Number ESX174;
81. 2005 HONDA RUBICON ATV, YELLOW IN COLOR, VIN 1HFTE260X54401644;
82. 2004 TRITON ELITE 16-101 FLATBED ALUMINUM TRAILER, VIN 4TCSS21494H102505, Alaska License Plate Number 5609RN; and
83. \$13,250.43 IN THE FORM OF A CASHIER'S CHECK, Seized June 28, 2006, From First National Bank Alaska Account Held In The Name Of Thomas Michael Cody, IV.